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SYMBOLIC ELEMENTS IN NAVAJO RITUAL¹

LOUISE LAMPHERE

Following Leach's emphasis (1966) on the communicative aspects of ritual, Navajo chants are analyzed as a system of symbols which communicate the Navajo model of the natural-supernatural world. At the same time, symbolic objects and actions transform the patient's body from a state of "ugly conditions" (illness) to one of "pleasant conditions" (health). Symbolic objects are manipulated in (1) prestations to the supernaturals and (2) actions directed towards the patient's body, which either identify the patient with the supernaturals or remove the "ugly conditions." Navajo ritual identification and removal imply an alternative to Turner's analysis of Ndembu symbols, where concepts derived from bodily experiences are projected onto the natural and social world. In Navajo chants, natural products are transformed into objects associated with the supernaturals, and these in turn are applied to or taken into the body; disease-causing elements which are simultaneously supernatural and natural are expelled. Rather than body processes being relevant to classifying the world, concepts concerning the natural-supernatural world are relevant to interpreting body processes.

INTRODUCTION

NAVAJO RITUAL is organized around chants or "sings" (*hatáál*); each chant is a system of ritual procedures conducted by a practitioner or "singer" (*hataati*) for a patient in order to cure illness. In this paper I will analyze the structure of symbolic² objects and actions used in a particular chant, the Male

1 My analysis is based on published materials on Navajo religion, supplemented by 21 months of fieldwork on the Navajo Reservation. During this time I was primarily interested in aspects of Navajo social organization; however, I attended numerous sings and talked informally with Navajos about religious beliefs and practices. Financial support for fieldwork came from several sources. During the summer of 1963, I spent 3 months in Ramah, New Mexico, as a member of the Harvard-Columbia National Science Foundation Field School. An additional 3 months were spent in Ramah in the summer, 1964, supported by a National Institute of Mental Health Fellowship (IFL MH 24, 103-01). An NIMH Research Grant Attachment (MH 11631-91) enabled me to spend 15 months in a community near Gallup, New Mexico, in order to conduct research for my Ph.D. dissertation. I am grateful to David Aberle, Niels Braroe, Grace Harris, Karl Heider, George Hicks, Nancy Leis, and Philip Leis for valuable comments and criticism on various ideas presented in this paper. An abbreviated version was presented at the American Anthropological Association Meetings in Seattle, November 1968.

2 The terms "symbol" and "symbolic" have been used in a variety of ways. I find it most useful to follow Geertz (1966:5) in regarding a symbol as "any object, act, event, quality, or relation which serves as a vehicle for a conception." The conception is the symbol's meaning. In analyzing ritual, it is important to note that ritual symbols are multivocal and susceptible of many meanings rather than being univocal and having only one proper meaning (Turner 1968:17). My analysis focuses on 2 types of symbols used in Navajo ritual: objects and actions. And I try to show how these have at least 2 sets of meanings: those which reflect cosmology and those which transform the patient from sickness to health.

Shooting Way, drawing on the recent approaches of Leach (1966) and Turner (1966). By examining the symbolic content of a single chant, I will both illustrate general patterns in Navajo ritual and expand Leach's and Turner's interpretations of ritual symbolism.

Leach (1966:406) stresses communicative aspects, that is, the ways in which "the patterning of ritual procedures can serve as a complex store of information" concerning Nature or Society. Information about Nature includes conceptualization of the topography, climate, usable and dangerous plants, animals, and inanimate things; information about Society includes the relations of men to other men, the nature of social groups, and the rules and constraints which make social life possible.

Since the dichotomy between Nature and Society does not accurately reflect Navajo beliefs, Leach's statements must be revised to better describe the information communicated through ritual. Navajo chants stress those conceptualizations labeled by Leach as "Nature": the structure of the universe as related to heavenly bodies, climatic features, topography, plants, and animals. "Society" as specified by the principles Leach mentions is slighted in Navajo ritual, but "Nature" becomes an all-inclusive organizing device: a fusion of natural, supernatural, and human or social elements.

Some natural phenomena (the sun, moon, earth, "light phenomena," and sacred mountains) are personified by "inner forms" (*biigistiin*); these inner forms are depicted in ritual (e.g., in sandpaintings) by stick figures with human attributes. Other natural phenomena (e.g., plants, animals, wind, thunder, and lightning) are either equated with or associated with *diyin dine'é*³ (Holy People or supernaturals). These Holy People (e.g., the Thunder People, Snake People, Buffalo People) and others who are not particularly related to natural phenomena (e.g., Changing Woman, Holy Man, Holy Boy) have superhuman qualities, such as the ability to change from one body form to another and to remain immune from illness and destruction. The *diyin dine'é* are also characterized by human attributes such as maleness or femaleness, and they can participate in human-like social relationships (marriage, child-rearing, and acting in terms of kinship roles).

3 *Diyin dine'é* has most often been translated as "Holy People." *Diyin*, however, connotes sacredness in the sense of super-human abilities and potentially dangerous powers rather than purity, reverence, or holiness. For this reason, I have used the term "supernaturals" or have retained the Navajo phrase. I have, however, translated the names of supernaturals and chants using the traditional label "Holy." Holy Young Man (*diyin dineh*) and Holy Boy (*diyin 'ashkii*) seem less awkward forms than "supernatural young man" or "sacred boy." "Holy Way version" has been used as a more economical translation of *diyink'eji* than "in the direction of the supernaturals."

Entities in all 3 groups—humans (*dine'é'*), the *diyín dine'é'*, and natural phenomena such as plants, animals, and climatic features—all possess the same kinds of souls; each has an "in-standing-one" (*bi'isizini*) and "breath" (*ítch'i*), by means of which it moves and has life (Haile 1943b).

In sum, natural, human, and supernatural entities in the Navajo universe share the same life-giving forces. Some plants, animals, and meteorological phenomena are associated with the *diyín dine'é'*, and these in turn are similar to humans (*dine'é'*). The *diyín dine'é'*, however, also have supernatural abilities not characteristic of ordinary people and natural phenomena. On the other hand, some natural phenomena and the *diyín dine'é'* share the quality of being "dangerous" (*bahadzid*) and capable of causing illness to humans.

The exploits of the *diyín dine'é'*, as they emerged from the "lower worlds," as they created or transformed aspects of the present world, and as they taught the ancestors of the Navajo the ceremonial knowledge necessary to perform the chants—these events are the subject of the Navajo origin myth and the myths which accompany each chant. The structure of natural, human, and supernatural elements discussed above is described in the myths and also communicated during each chant. This provides the first major theme of my analysis: the ways in which ritual replicates the Navajo universe.

The second theme deals with the natural-supernatural world as related to the cure of the patient. Illness is thought to be a state of "ugly conditions" (*hóchq̄*) which has resulted from the patient's contact with something "dangerous." If a chant is performed which acts against the relevant "dangerous" factor and which invokes the aid of the proper *diyín dine'é'*, the patient will be returned to a state of "pleasant conditions" (*hózhq̄*). Symbolic objects and actions used with reference to the patient's body effect this transformation. The bodily reference of symbols is suggested by Turner (1966) in his article on "Colour Classification in Ndembu Ritual." He focuses on the importance of certain bodily and emotional experiences. The three colors—white, red, and black—which are prominent in Ndembu ritual represent products of the human body (e.g., milk, blood, and faeces),

whose emission, spilling, or production is associated with a heightening of emotion. . . . These heightened bodily experiences are felt to be informed with a power in excess of that averagely possessed by the individual; its source may be located in the cosmos or in society; analogues of physical experience may then be found wherever the same colours occur in nature; or else experience of social relations in heightened emotional circumstances may be *classified* under a colour rubric (Turner 1966:80).

In other words,

Not only do the three colours stand for basic human experiences of the body (associated with the gratification of libido, hunger, aggressive and excretory drives and with fear, anxiety, and submissiveness), they also provide a kind of primordial classification of reality (Turner 1966:81).

In contrast to Durkheim's analysis (1915), in which social groupings or society form the basis of classification, Turner (1966:82) postulates that "the human organism and its crucial experiences are the *fons et origo* of all classifications." Beidelman has utilized and expanded on this interpretation of symbols in his papers on Swazi royal ritual (1966a) and Nuer symbolism (1966b, 1968).

Turner and Beidelman, if I understand them correctly, find that bodily states provide a paradigm for the classification of Nature and/or Society. Body fluids constitute the basis for symbols which make the kind of communicative statements emphasized by Leach (1966). Navajo ritual symbolism, as I interpret it, represents the reverse process. Symbolic statements about the supernatural-natural world provide the basic paradigm for interpreting bodily processes of illness and health. Ritual does more than communicate the structure of the Navajo universe; as I will show, natural materials become symbolic objects associated with supernaturals. These are combined with symbolic actions to express prestation, identification, and removal so that the relationship with the *diyin dine'é* is altered and the patient's body is transformed from a state of "ugly conditions" to "pleasant conditions."

APPROACHES TO NAVAJO RELIGION

There is an extensive anthropological literature on Navajo religion which can be characterized as follows. First, many accounts are descriptive: either they provide minute details of particular chants (e.g., Matthews 1887, 1897, 1902; Stevenson 1886; Kluckhohn and Wyman 1940), or they are texts of the myths which account for the origin of various chants (e.g., Haile 1938b, 1943a; Newcomb and Reichard 1937; Reichard 1939; Wyman 1957). Though these accounts include few theoretical insights, they provide a wealth of raw data for reanalysis by those who have a particular problem to be studied. I will base my own analysis on one of these descriptive accounts (Haile 1947).

Second, few of the publications which have analytical importance analyze the meaning or structure of symbolic acts and objects. This is not to say that there is a lack of data on symbols. Reichard (1950), Haile (1938b, 1943a, 1947), and Kluckhohn and Wyman (1940) all contain information on the preparation, use, and meaning of medicines and ceremonial paraphernalia. Reichard, in particular, discusses the symbolic use of colors, directions, and sex distinctions in ritual; Haile

provides very careful translations of the native terms for objects and actions, and gives information on the meaning of the more abstract religious concepts. However, all of these sources fail to bring together the data to show how Navajo ritual constitutes a system of interrelated symbols which are repeatedly patterned in a particular manner. The analysis I will present contains little that is new to specialists of Navajo religion, since most of the data are drawn from published sources. I hope, however, to utilize information scattered throughout the literature for a careful and coherent account of the symbolic structure of Navajo ritual.

Finally, I am critical of the analytical literature which contains statements about the nature of ritual as conceptualized by the Navajo themselves. For example, many studies have stated that the purpose of a chant is to bring the patient into "harmony" with the universe. Typical of this interpretation is Kluckhohn and Leighton's statement (1962:231-232):

In the height of the chant the patient himself becomes one of the Holy People, puts his feet in their moccasins, and breathes in the strength of the sun. He comes into complete harmony with the universe and must of course be free of all ills and evil.

This passage alludes to the Navajo concepts of *hózhó* and *hóchó*, but I would question the appropriateness of translating *hózhó* as "harmony" (or "goodness," "happiness," "beauty," as others have translated it) and *hóchó* as "evil." These English terms imply Western philosophical and theological concepts and do not provide an accurate rendering of the Navajo meaning. The term "harmony" especially stresses the importance of "communion relationships" with the supernatural (Horton 1960:212),⁴ but other passages from Kluckhohn and Leighton (1962:193, 200, 202) suggest that "manipulative relationships" are more characteristic man-to-god transactions. It is important, then, to translate native terms carefully to avoid misinterpreting the fundamental nature of Navajo ritual. For this reason I have chosen Haile's more neutral translation of "pleasant conditions" for *hózhó* and "ugly conditions" for *hóchó*.

In short, I will draw upon the descriptive data available, but hope to go be-

⁴ Horton (1960:212) suggests 2 types of man-to-man relationships which can also be used to characterize man-to-god relations. In the communion relationship (e.g., between 2 lovers), "ego's action is directed entirely towards obtaining certain responses in alter which he values intrinsically"; he also gives to alter responses which embody the same intrinsic values. In contrast, a manipulative relationship (e.g., between 2 business men) is one in which alter is treated as a means to a goal which can be described without reference to the behavior included in the relationship itself.

yond previous interpretations by viewing Navajo ritual as a system of interrelated symbols and by using careful translations of the Navajo concepts.

MALE SHOOTING WAY

I have found that the most useful published data for a symbolic analysis are contained in a text of an entire ritual recorded in the native language with inter-linear translation into English. Haile (1947) has published such an account: *Prayerstick Cutting in a Five Night Navaho Ceremonial of the Male Branch of Shooting Way*. It contains data in Navajo on symbolic objects and actions in addition to texts of the songs which accompany the ritual. From a careful reading one can interpret key words and phrases which clarify the meaning of symbols. It is this text of Male Shooting Way, supplemented by my own observations and by data from the publications of Kluckhohn, Wyman, Haile, and Reichard, which is the basis for the following analysis.

Male Shooting Way is part of a complex of Shooting Way Chants (Wyman and Kluckhohn 1938:5). The basic division in this complex is between Male and Female Shooting Way Chants, each of which is based on a separate myth and consequently differs in some ritual procedures. Male Shooting Way itself has two distinct versions. The Holy Way version is simply called "Male Shooting Way" (*na'a't'oee bakq'ji*). This indicates that the chant is being performed "in the direction of the supernaturals" (*diyink'ehji*) and is concerned with improper contact with arrows, snakes, and lightning, these being dangerous phenomena associated with the supernaturals. The Ugly Way version is called "Male Shooting Way Ugly" (*na'a'toee bakq'ji hochóóji*); it is derived from a different myth which includes incidents of witchcraft. Consequently, this version counteracts contact with the most common "ugly things": witches and ghosts.

Each chant is composed of several sub-ceremonies which can be combined into 2-night, 5-night, or 9-night versions. Chants begin at sundown, and the number of "nights" or "days" is calculated on a sundown to sundown basis. Thus a 2-night chant begins at sundown (the first night), continues the next day, and ends with an all-night singing the second night. The Holy Way version of Male Shooting Way can emphasize one or more sub-ceremonies. A 5-night performance can be a "Chant with Prayerstick" (*k'ee't'áán bee hatáál*) or a "Chant with Sandpaintings" (*'iikááh bee hatáál*). In the former, prayersticks are offered to a different group of supernaturals each morning for 4 days; in the latter, sandpaintings depicting supernaturals are made, one on each of the 4 mornings. In a 9-night performance both are combined; prayersticks are offered on the first 4 days, and

sandpaintings are made the next 4 days. On the last day either a "Chant with Sun's House" (*jóhona' áí baghan bee hatáál*) or "Chant with Corral Dance" (*na'at'oe bakq'ji dziik'iji*) is performed.

Since my analysis is based on Haile's text, it is concerned with the Male Shooting Way, Chant with Prayersticks (*na'at'oe bakq'ji k'ee'áan bee hatáál*). This performance stresses the presentation of offerings to the supernaturals as well as the identification of the patient with them; the identification theme is even more prevalent in the Male Shooting Way, Chant with Sandpaintings, when sandpaintings are made every day. The Ugly Way Version, in contrast, includes very different sub-ceremonies which stress the removal of "ugly things."

THE RELATION BETWEEN MYTH AND RITUAL

The myth which "belongs to" each chant and which validates its content tells of the particular incidents whereby the ritual procedures used in the chant are acquired by some of the *diyín dine'é'* and later transferred to the *nahokáá dine'é'* (the "earth surface people" or ancestors of the Navajo). The myth is an aid to analyzing the ritual in 3 ways: it (1) identifies the major supernaturals symbolized in the chant, (2) helps interpret the meaning of the song groups or "sets" which accompany the ritual, and (3) explains the origin and significance of objects used during the ritual.

The myth of Male Shooting Way tells of 2 heroes (Holy Young Man and Holy Boy) who experience a series of trials and misfortunes. Various supernaturals aid them, and the heroes learn a ceremony which can counteract their troubles. Two female counterparts, Holy Young Woman and Holy Girl, play a minor role in some of the incidents. The major incidents of the myth include a visit of both heroes to the Sun, the trip of Holy Young Man to the home of the thunders in the sky, where he learns much of the Shooting Way ritual, an incident in which Holy Boy is swallowed by a fish, and a series of episodes with the Buffalo People.

The myth thus introduces the 4 major supernaturals (Holy Young Man, Holy Boy, Holy Young Woman, and Holy Girl), who are depicted in the sandpaintings mentioned in many songs. The songs also name other supernaturals, places, and events which can be traced to the major myth incidents mentioned above. The relation between myth incident and song sets is as follows:

1. Visit to Big Snake and Snake People

Snake Songs
(first day, second night)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 2. Sky visit | Thunder Songs
(second day, third night) |
| 3. Trip with Buffaloes | Buffalo Songs
(third day, fourth night) |
| 4. Incidents at the Sun's Home | Sun Songs
(fourth day) |
| 5. Holy Boy swallowed by fish | Fish Songs
(fifth or last night) ⁵ |

The objects which are a permanent part of the singer's medicine bag (*jish*) are all mentioned in the myth. Some of these represent objects worn or carried by the supernaturals. Other objects are used to produce sounds associated with the supernaturals. In addition, stylized pictures which are painted on the "wide board" fetishes used in Male Shooting Way and which appear in sandpaintings represent the supernaturals discussed in the myth. Particular supernaturals and objects and the content of songs can be traced to the myth which accompanies a chant; however, a Navajo chant is not a re-enactment of the myth story, but has a structure of its own. Objects and actions are patterned in particular ways and provide the 2 themes of my analysis of ritual structure. First, I will discuss the ways in which they are used to communicate the pattern of the supernatural-natural world. Then I will show how they are used to transform the patient's relations to particular *diyin dine'é'* in this supernatural-natural world and also to change his body's state from sickness to health.

RITUAL AS REFLECTING COSMOLOGY

The chant takes place in the hoghan (house) of the patient. Though various kin of the patient—his spouse or his parents—may attend and aid in the ritual, the chant is focused on the individual and not on a group. The main personnel are the singer, the patient, and the supernaturals. The placement of objects and the sequences of actions show that the chant setting itself corresponds to a "map" of the Navajo universe.

The Navajo think of their cosmos as a circle where the "sky horizon edge" (*yákáshbah*) meets the "earth horizon edge" (*ni'káshbah*) (see Fig. 1). The circular horizon is divided into "light phenomena." Each has an "inner form" (*biigistiin*) which is male or female, and each is associated with one of 4 direc-

5 The other 4 song sets are also repeated the fifth or last night along with the First Songs and Dawn Songs.

tions and one of 4 colors. As one Navajo informant depicted the circle (Haile 1943), Dawn Man (associated with whiteness) lies on the horizon from east to south; Horizontal Blue Man lies from south to west; Evening Twilight Woman (associated with yellow) lies from west to north; and Darkness Woman (associated with black) lies from north to east.

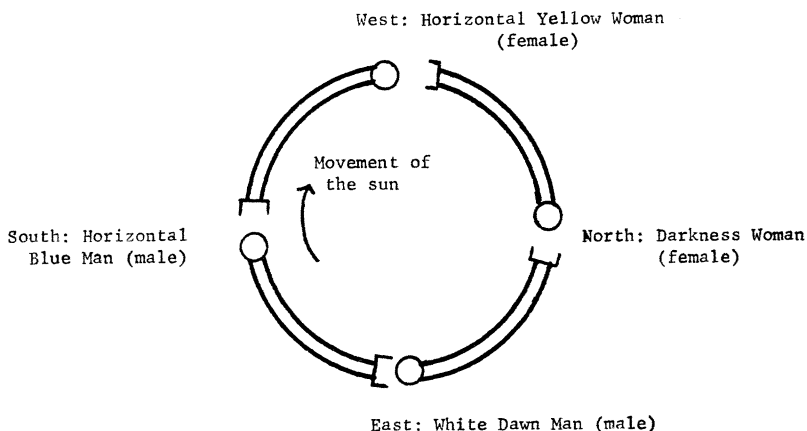


FIG. 1. The circular Navajo cosmos depicted in terms of the 4 "light phenomena" (from Haile 1943b:71).

Other objects in the natural world, such as the 4 sacred Navajo mountains, 4 precious stones, 4 types of corn, and 4 birds, are also classed in terms of the same colors and directions. Some of these are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Natural Objects Associated with the Four Directions and Colors
(from Reichard 1945:215)

Direction	Color	Phenomena	Mountain	Jewel	Bird
East	White	Dawn Man	Mt. Blanca	White Shell	Pigeon
South	Blue	Horizontal Blue Man	Mt. Taylor	Turquoise	Bluebird
West	Yellow	Horizontal Yellow Woman	San Francisco Peaks	Abalone	Yellow Warbler
North	Black	Darkness Woman	La Plata Peaks	Jet	Blackbird

The order in which directions are named (east, south, west, and north) follows the clockwise motion of the sun as it advances across the sky when the observer is oriented to the south. In sum, the circular horizon, the 2 sexes, the 4 directions, the 4 colors, and the clockwise movement of the sun are the Navajo distinctions basic to the cosmological scheme.

These distinctions are also expressed in the chant setting itself, where the same scheme is replicated. The chant takes place in a Navajo hoghan, which is circular like the horizon (see Fig. 2). Movement during a ritual is always clock-

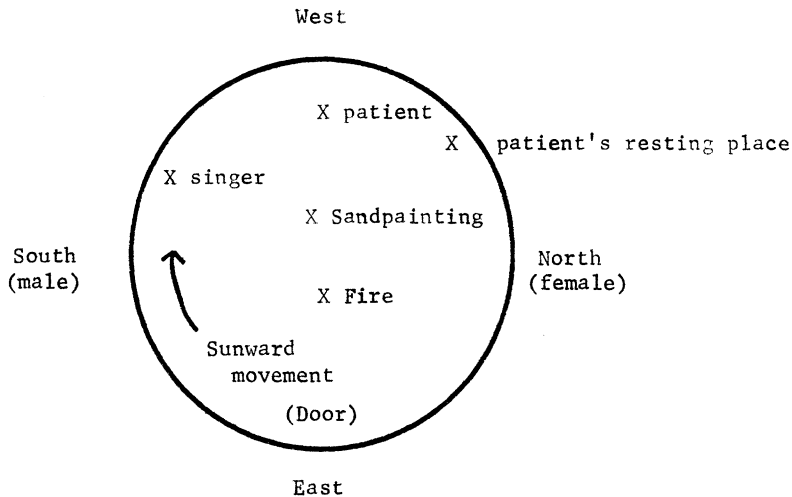


FIG. 2. The ceremonial hoghan.

wise or "in the direction of the sun." Men sit on the south side of the hoghan; women sit on the north side. The singer sits on the southwest side, and the patient, when resting, sits on the northwest side. When participating in a bath or sandpainting, or being "sung over" by the singer, the patient is always seated on the west side directly opposite the door. Sandpaintings are always made in the area in front of the patient's position, that is, on the west side between the fire and the rear of the hoghan.

The east is associated with *diyin* (sacredness), the north with *hóchó* (ugly conditions). Prayersticks and other offerings are deposited towards the east, and the chant fetishes are arranged to face in this direction. In contrast to these ritual

objects presented to the supernaturals, objects which have been pressed against the patient in order to remove *hóchó* are deposited towards the north.

Though not conceived by the Navajos in this manner, the hogan can be viewed as divided into 2 halves (the south and east versus the north and west). The singer, or one who is able to cure through ritual knowledge, is associated with maleness on the south and the *diyín* on the east. The patient, when resting, is associated with the female side of the hogan (the north) and hence with darkness, the color black, and *hóchó* (the source of illness). When participating in the ritual, the patient sits to the west, halfway between the female north and the male south (the contrast between sickness and health) and opposite the door on the east, which is associated with *diyín* (sacred).

In the Male Shooting Way, the specific associations of color and direction differ from that of the cosmological model, but the fourfold scheme is still dominant. Each of the major supernaturals (2 male and 2 female) is associated with a direction and a color. Instead of pairing white with east, blue with south, yellow with west, and black with north, the following connections are made: Holy Young Man is associated with black and east, Holy Young Woman with white and west, Holy Boy with south and blue, Holy Girl with north and yellow. This fourfold scheme is a condensed code for ordering and interpreting the myriad of ritual actions, using symbolic objects, which are performed during the 5 days of a Male Shooting Chant. For instance, the cutting of prayersticks, the making of a sand-painting, and the text of a song-set all repeat this pattern, which in turn mirrors Navajo cosmology.

To understand the implications of these activities beyond their use in communicating the structure of the supernatural-natural world, it is important to view the way in which they transform the patient's body state and his relation to the *diyín dine'é'*. The necessity of these transformations will become clearer through a more detailed discussion of Navajo conceptions of illness.

DISEASE THEORY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE PATIENT'S STATE

In a recent analysis of Navajo medical terminology, Werner (1965) has described the perimeters of "being sick" as a set of overlapping circles. In the innermost circle are 7 terms which describe sickness and suffering in human beings; these terms also have overlapping ranges of application determined by the duration and intensity of the illness. In the second circle the term *kanaaghá* applies to "sickness" of human beings and animals. The third circle contains the term *daatsaah* which describes "sickness" or disturbance in all living things except

plants. And finally, *bqahdahaž'á* can refer to any element in the Navajo universe and indicate that it is not functioning properly, that "something is the matter with him or it" (Werner 1965:11, 13).⁶

Werner (1965:11) finds that, "While this term encompasses all disturbances of the harmony of the Navajo universe, all other terms are completely contained within its perimeter." Whether or not *bqahdahaž'á* correlates with the "disharmony" described in Navajo ethnographies, it suggests that the domain of sickness, suffering, or disorder encompasses the entire Navajo world.

Causes of illness are not discussed by Werner, and most sources are unclear regarding the exact relationship between the *diyin dine'é*, elements which are dangerous and disease causing, and the selection of a particular chant as a cure.

Wyman and Kluckhohn (1938:13, 14) list 4 groups of "etiological factors" which can produce sickness:

1. natural phenomena, such as lightning, winds, thunder, and sometimes the earth, sun, or moon;
2. some species of animals, including bear, deer, coyote, porcupine, snakes, eagle, and fish;⁷
3. ceremonial paraphernalia or activities which are contacted at inappropriate times;
4. ghosts of either Navajos or aliens and witches, including werewolves.

They use the term "infection" to describe the "malign disease-producing influence which is supposed to emanate from any of the supposed sources of disease" (Wyman and Kluckhohn 1938:13), but they do not provide the corresponding Navajo terms or discuss how a Navajo would describe the process of infection.

Haile (1938a:648) states:

If the patient has been bitten by a snake, attacked by a bear, hurled aside by the wind or thunder, the evidence is clear that injury has been inflicted by these factors. Evidence even, as in the case of a direct attack by a bear or a thunderstroke, that the

6 Some of the terms in the innermost circle (e.g., *kanjighá*, *daajitsaah*, *hqaqdahaž'á*) are derived from the same verb stems as the forms *kanaaghá*, *daatsaah*, and *bqahdahaž'á*, which make up the second, third, and fourth circles, and describe sickness in other beings as well as humans. For instance, the *hqaq*-prefix of *hqaqdahaž'á* specifies humans, while *bqah*- makes the term *bqahdahaž'á* applicable to all parts of the Navajo universe.

7 Kluckhohn and Wyman mention 32 kinds, but do not provide an exhaustive list except by indicating that informants mentioned 10 mammals, 7 reptiles, 12 birds, 2 amphibians, and fish (generic term).

deezláá, "weapon," or *bik'a*, "its arrow," may be lodged in the patient's interior. There is evidence, in any event, of the anger of the holy ones. The first objective, therefore, of a ceremonial conducted in the holy way ritual must be to remove this weapon or dart as a sign of anger, a sort of exorcism, after which the process of rendering the patient holy or impassible to similar attacks may be begun and completed by the ceremonial.

Reichard (1950:104) notes: "Bad things sent by malevolent spirits, or even the spirits themselves, may enter the body." She also mentions (1950:108-109) that "Evils entering the body may be in the stomach, or they may be in the form of arrows or witch weapons imbedded in the flesh."⁸

Kaplan and Johnson (1964), in discussing Navajo psychopathology, give evidence that illness is the result of possession by certain aspects (e.g., the "in-standing one" or "breath") of dangerous animals, natural phenomena, witches, or ghosts. For example, they (1964:208) provide the following statements from Navajo informants concerning bear sickness:

"If you go up in the mountain where the bear is bedded down . . . [and] . . . you bedded down there, it will get you that way . . . make your head go wrong."

"Sometimes if you cross a bear's path and pick up some ants the bear rolled over, or slept on, you are liable to have mental troubles. . . ."

"Fright or shock comes from the breath of such an animal (deer, bear) from a distance. It affects the heart. From close it makes you weak. Happens with other animals also, buffaloes, antelope."

Kaplan and Johnson (1964:212) conclude that illness in general and mental illness in particular is "a consequence of a malevolent power or force that enters the body and becomes temporarily or permanently 'that which stands within' the body and gives it life or movement." They (1964:214) suggest this is a type of possession, although this term is not used directly by Navajos.

These passages are suggestive but not conclusive. It is not clear, for instance, whether contact with a bear, snake, or lightning-struck tree involves possession by dangerous aspects of these entities or whether it constitutes contact with the *diyin dine'é*, and/or their "weapons" *per se*. Another possibility is that activities in-

8 Kluckhohn (1944) discusses 4 types of witchcraft: witchery (*'áńtí*), sorcery (*'ińzjíd*), wizardry (*'adagash*), and frenzy witchcraft. The first 2 are the most common and probably form one complex of beliefs about malevolent activities. Werewolves (*yeenaaldlooshi*) are the most frequently mentioned manifestation of witchcraft (*'áńt'í*). They are thought to be humans who have slipped into animal skins and who travel abroad at night to use "corpse poison" on their victims to cause illness.

volution dangerous animals or natural phenomena automatically arouse the supernatural's attack by weapons or anger, which in turn brings sickness. Until more fieldwork can be conducted on Navajo disease theory, it is only possible to suggest that, in some sense, the natural elements are fused with the supernatural. The snake with which the Navajo might have contact and such *diyín dine'é'* as Big Snake (*t'íistso*) and the Snake People (*t'íish dine'é'*) are, at some level, equated. It is impossible to determine if they are different forms of the supernatural, if the snake is a present-day natural manifestation of supernatural figures of the mythical past, or if they are 2 separate types of phenomena, one natural and the other supernatural, which share common dangerous characteristics. Whether one of these possibilities or yet another set of relationships best characterize Navajo beliefs regarding these matters cannot be concluded without more detailed data.

There is, however, a rough correlation between the "dangerous element" thought to cause illness and the chant which is chosen for a cure. A visit to a diviner (a handtrembler or stargazer) determines which element is "bothering" the patient and which chant is an appropriate treatment. If snakes, lightning, or other "shooting things" are responsible, the diviner might recommend the Male or Female Shooting Way. Illness resulting from contact with snakes can also be treated by Beauty Way or Navajo Wind Way.

The process of becoming sick, which has just been discussed, and the process of curing which takes place during a chant can be summarized by 2 pairs of contrasting Navajo concepts. The first pair has already been mentioned many times: the distinction between *hózhó* (pleasant conditions) and *hóchó* (ugly conditions). Following the interpretations of Haile, Reichard, Kaplan and Johnson, *hóchó* suggests the "ugly things," anger, weapons, or even the "in-standing-one" (associated with natural phenomena, witches, ghosts, or supernaturals), which have entered the patient's body and must be removed if the patient is to regain the state of *hózhó*. The remaining 2 concepts are found in the verb stem *-ghíít* (to sanctify) and *-tí* (to act or do). The term *diyín*, transcribed as *dighin* in some sources, is derived from the stem *-ghíít* and is found in the term *diyín dine'é'*, or supernaturals. *Diyín* connotes the possession of superhuman abilities and immunity from sickness or other ugly conditions.

The stem *-tí* is the basis for the term *'ání'tí*, which means "someone acts against him," referring to witchcraft by another human being or the action of such etiological factors as snakes, bears, lightning, etc. Together these 4 concepts summarize Navajo ritual action. The purpose of a chant is (1) to counteract the "action against" the patient (*'ání'tí*) and remove "ugly conditions" (*hóchó*), and (2) to produce immunity by making the patient *diyín* and thus create "pleasant

conditions" (*hózhǫ́*). Necessary to this process of curing are the ritual objects used during the chant.

RITUAL OBJECTS

I have treated as symbolic objects a wide range of items: (1) the fetishes which are a permanent part of the singer's pouch; (2) the objects constructed during the chant (e.g., prayersticks and sandpaintings), partly from the singer's supplies and partly from materials (such as ground stone, yucca root, corn meal) obtained by the patient's relatives according to the singer's specifications; and (3) medicines prepared during the chant from the singer's supply of pollen and plant materials.

The singer's pouch contains the following:

- 4 "wide boards"
- 4 arrows (tail-feathered, feathered-cane, half-yellow tail, and red-wing arrows)
- 2 bows
- 2 smooth canes
- 4 "talking prayersticks" (representing the sky people, water people, sunlight people, and summer people)
- 2 "tie-ons"
- 4 "held to water" plumes
- 2 medicine stoppers
- a whistle, bull-roarer, firedrill, and basket drum

All these objects are associated with the supernaturals mentioned in the myth. The arrows, bows, "tie-ons," and smooth canes are either weapons carried by the 2 male myth heroes and their female counterparts or are items of apparel worn by them. The whistle and bull-roarer are used to produce sounds associated with the *diyin dine'é*. The "held to water" plumes were given by the supernaturals because they "cool the patient" (Haile 1947:6). The talking prayersticks were used by Talking God⁹ in conducting "prayer talks" toward the 4 cardinal directions; he gave them to the Navajo in order to conduct Shooting Way (Haile 1947:59). The medicine stoppers are placed across the bowl of medicine before it is given to the patient; the "life quality" of the feathers which make up these plumed fetishes imparts life to the medicine (Haile 1947:42) and also protects it from "ugly things" which might enter (Kluckhohn and Wyman 1940:3).

The "wide boards" (rectangular 4 by 9 inch boards with tapered ends) depict

⁹ Talking God is one of the major *diyin dine'é*. He is prominent in many of the myths and often acts as a mentor directing mythical characters, warning them or giving objects to help them overcome difficulties (Reichard 1950:476).

the supernaturals themselves. On the first board there is a symbolic representation of the major incident in the myth: Holy Young Man is shown being taken by Thunder Man to the sky, where he learns the Shooting Way Chant. Symbols of the sun, moon, sky and earth, darkness and dawn, horizon blue and evening twilight appear on the other boards; all these represent phenomena which are important in the myth and mentioned in the songs of the chant.

The sandpaintings and prayersticks made during the chant also contain stylized pictures of supernaturals. The sandpaintings may show supernaturals holding the bows, arrows, or canes represented by bow, arrow, and cane fetishes from the singer's pouch. The prayersticks made during the ritual contain markings which identify them with the snakes, winds, and thunders to whom they are offered.

All of these objects and the medicines administered to the patient are carefully prepared, using a combination of animal, plant, or mineral ingredients from the natural world. For example, as described by Haile (1947:15-21), each of the 4 arrows is made from a length of reed or stick fletched with feathers and wound with animal sinew strung with beads; if a reed is used, its hollow center is filled with down, a jewel stone, and medicines. The particular materials used for each arrow vary. For instance, the tail-feathered arrow and the half-yellow tail feather are made of reed (one from the Taos area, one from the Oraibi area) while the other 2 arrows are made from lightning-struck sticks. The tail-feathered arrow (associated with one of the male heroes, Holy Young Man) is fletched with eagle and bluebird feathers, and wrapped with the tail sinew of a mountain lion and a thong strung with turquoise. Its center is filled with bluebird down, a turquoise disc treated with pollen in the mouth of a bluebird, the death blood of a buffalo, dust from the 4 sacred mountains, and several kinds of medicines. The half-yellow tail-feather arrow is associated with the other male hero, Holy Boy. The materials used differ in that the fletching feathers are from a yellow-tailed eagle or red-shouldered hawk, and abalone discs are wound around the shaft. The center is stuffed with a white bead (rather than turquoise), which is treated with pollen in a female (rather than male) bluebird's mouth; blood from a female (rather than male) buffalo is used.

Materials from the natural world are combined in ways specified by the chant myth so that objects associated with the *diyin dine'e'* are produced. The same color and sex distinctions which characterize the cosmological scheme described above are also prominent in the materials used to construct an item and to associate it with a particular supernatural. For example, blue and male symbolism is used in the tail-feathered arrow to associate it with Holy Young Man. White and yellow, male and female elements are used in the half-yellow tail-feather arrow to identify

it with Holy Boy.¹⁰ The use of the proper materials prepared according to the proper ritual formulae insures that the object will have *ba'áilil* (power) and be effective.

During the chant, ritual objects are combined with several kinds of ritual actions: (1) prestations from the patient to the supernaturals, (2) actions of incorporation which are directed to the patient's body and which identify the patient with the supernaturals, and (3) actions of removal which also involve the patient's body and which rid it of "ugly conditions."

RITUAL ACTIONS: PRESTATION

Transactions with the supernatural primarily consist of prestations called *-gheel*, a term often translated as "sacrifice" or "offering." The most common form is a prayerstick (*k'eeł'áán*) which, if correctly presented to the appropriate supernatural, compels him to aid the patient (Aberle 1967). In the Male Shooting Way, Chant with Prayersticks, offerings are prepared for each of 4 groups: (1) the snake people, (2) various sky phenomena such as thunder and lightning, (3) the buffalo people, and (4) the sky, earth, sun, moon, dark and yellow winds. As indicated earlier, each group is correlated with one of the important myth incidents mentioned previously, and each is the topic of a song set. On each of 4 mornings, 8 prayersticks are prepared for one of the groups; reeds are cut, painted, and stuffed with tobacco. On the first day, snake songs are sung as the snake-people prayersticks are being prepared, and these songs are repeated that evening (the second night); the sky phenomena provide the theme for the second day and third night with wind, thunder, or lightning prayersticks and thunder songs. The buffalo people are prominent on the third day and fourth night, and the final group of sun, earth, sky, moon, and winds are treated on the fourth day when the sun's songs are used.¹¹ After preparation, the prayersticks are symbolically "lighted" by the patient. Following a long prayer-litany they are deposited to the east of the hoghan in places associated with those particular supernaturals. In

10 Color associations between arrows and the 2 male deities are not the same as the pairing of black and east with Holy Young Man, and south and blue with Holy Boy which occurs in the songs and other parts of the ritual. This indicates that the patterning of color symbolism in Navajo chants is often complex and contradictory.

11 Haile's catalogue of prayersticks used in the Male Shooting Way (1947:appendix) shows that there are many sets of prayersticks within each group from which the patient may choose. For instance, there are 8 groups of snake prayersticks; the first group (Big Snake, his 4 prayersticks) must be offered, but the patient may pick one of the other 7 sets of 4 prayersticks to complete the number of 8 prayersticks offered the first day.

return for the correct prestation, the immunity-producing quality of ritual objects and actions is assured.

RITUAL ACTIONS: IDENTIFICATION AND REMOVAL

In addition to obtaining aid from supernaturals by the presentation of *-gheel*, much ritual action associates the patient's body with the supernaturals by (1) applying objects externally and (2) administering medicines internally. This symbolism of identification by incorporation (both through "applying to" or "taking in") is contrasted with the symbolism of removal or "taking out" substances which are making the patient sick.

There are several specific actions used during the course of the chant which exemplify the theme of "taking in" or "applying to." The aim of these actions is to identify the patient with the supernatural and make him sacred. Pressing (*'ida'iiltsood*) is done with articles from a singer's pouch, particularly the "wide boards," arrows, bows, and talking prayersticks. Objects are pressed to body parts in the following ritual order: left sole, right sole, left knee, right knee, breast, back, left palm, right palm, left shoulder, right shoulder, and top of head.¹² Bringing sacred objects derived from the supernaturals into direct contact with the patient's body sanctifies him (makes him *diyin*).

On the first night and at several other times during the Male Shooting Way, the contents of the pouch are pressed against the patient. Afterwards the singer holds the whistle in his mouth and gives a call to each of the 4 cardinal directions. This call (*'ánígo*) directs the attention of the supernaturals to the fact that the patient is being sanctified. Motions to the 4 directions or sunwards are performed by the singer before painting is begun and before pressing the sandpainting against the patient's body. Daily, *-gheel* (prestations) are given to the supernaturals by the patient; calling and motioning dramatize the reciprocal part of this transaction—they symbolize that the supernaturals are reacting by sanctifying the patient and making him immune.

Another important ritual action is "feeding the patient" (*hazaat'á*, literally, "a unit was put into his mouth"), which takes place when the singer administers to the patient the foot liniment medicine (*ket'oh*),¹³ "mouth-put" medicine (*zaanii!*), or "ceremonial stew" (3 important mixtures of herbs and pollen). The symbolism here is that the medicine of a supernatural has entered the patient's

12 "Left" takes precedence over "right" in Shooting Way, a reverse of the usual order, because in shooting with a bow and arrow the left side is more exposed and closer to danger than the right side.

13 *Ket'oh* is also rubbed on the body before the patient drinks the remainder.

mouth (Haile 1947:101), or that he is eating "sacred food" (Haile 1947:29-31). Sacred material thus enters the body as well as being applied to the external parts. A "pollen ball" is swallowed by the patient on the fourth day of the chant. This becomes the patient's "inner setting" or distinctive mark (Haile 1947:56), for it is permanently set in the patient's back and chest. The pollen ball is termed an "offering" or "sacrifice" (*'agheel*). This act suggests that a prestation is taken into the patient himself rather than being offered to the supernaturals; it directly transforms him into a sacred person and remains part of him permanently.

A final act of sanctification which takes place at dawn of the fifth day, just before the close of the ceremony, is "inhaling dawn's breath." The patient goes outside the hogan and, drawing his hands toward his mouth, inhales the dawn's breath 4 times (Haile 1947:34). Since "breath" is one of the Navajo soul concepts, and since it gives life to the individual, breathing in the "life-stuff" of the dawn is undoubtedly a crucial act in restoring and sanctifying the patient.

There are also several actions which remove "ugly things." During an "unraveling ceremony" (used in the Ugly Way versions of most chants), feathers or herbs are bound in bundles with strips of yucca (Kluckhohn and Wyman 1940:78). The bundles are applied to parts of the patient's body, and the strips are yanked off, releasing the "ugly things" inside. During a sweat and emetic ceremony a mixture of herbs and water is administered to the patient while a large fire inside the hogan induces sweating; the patient vomits the emetic and releases "ugly things" from inside the body. Ash blowing (blowing ashes off a feather) also symbolizes getting rid of "ugly things."

The patient's body is involved both externally and internally, whether the action is directed towards sanctification or towards removing agents which act against the patient. The emphasis in the Holy Way version of the Male Shooting Way is upon the symbolism of "taking in," which identifies the patient with the supernatural. The symbolism of "taking out" plays a minor role and is prominent only in the sweat and emetic sub-ceremonies. The opposite is true of the Ugly Way version of Male Shooting Way; here sub-ceremonies stress "taking out" and removal, while the process of identification is less important.

EVENTS OF THE MALE SHOOTING WAY

A brief description of the events of the Holy Way version demonstrates how the actions and objects mentioned previously are woven together to stress the 3 themes of identification, prestation, and removal. Table 2 shows the sequence of sub-ceremonies and includes an enumeration of the songs chanted and the prayer-sticks offered during the 5 days of the chant. During the first night of the chant,

TABLE 2
Chronology of Male Shooting Way, Chant with Prayersticks

Time	Sub-Ceremony	Songs and Ritual Objects	Symbolic Process Emphasized
I. First night: Sundown	Hoghan consecration	Foot liniment songs and medicine songs	Identification
Evening	Short singing	Darkness songs	
First day: Before dawn	Upright setting		
Dawn	Sweat and emetic	Emetic songs	Removal
		Snake songs	
Forenoon	Prayerstick offerings	4 big snake prayersticks; 4 other snake prayersticks	Prestation
II. Second night: Evening	Short singing	Snake songs	
Second day: Before dawn	Upright setting		
Dawn	Sweat and emetic	Thunder songs	Removal
Forenoon	Prayerstick offerings	4 wind prayersticks 4 cloud, lightning, or thunder prayersticks	Prestation
III. Third night: Evening	Short singing	Thunder songs	
Third day: Before dawn	Upright setting		
Dawn	Sweat and emetic	Buffalo songs	Removal
Forenoon	Prayerstick offerings	4 buffalo prayersticks 4 Holy Man and Holy Woman prayersticks or 4 buffalo prayersticks	Prestation
IV. Fourth night: Evening	Short singing	Buffalo songs	
Fourth day: Before dawn	Upright setting		
	Sweat and emetic	Sun songs	Removal
Forenoon	Prayerstick offerings	Sky, earth, sun, moon prayersticks; dark and yellow winds prayer- sticks (or Corn Boy and Corn Girl or Pollen Boy and Pollen Girl prayersticks)	Prestation
Late fore- noon	Bath		
Afternoon	Sandpainting	Figures of Holy Man, Holy Boy, Holy Woman, Holy Girl	Identification
V. Fifth night: Evening	All night singing	First songs *Darkness songs *Thunder songs Fish songs Holy Man's songs *Sun's songs *Buffalo songs Dawn songs	
Fifth day: Dawn	Dawn procedures		Identification

* Songs used previously are repeated.

after the hoghan is made sacred, the "foot liniment" medicine and the "mouth-put" medicine are given to the patient while the singer chants the "foot liniment" and "medicine" songs. The songs name many of the relevant supernaturals and outline the process of identification by subtle changes in the verb stem used in each verse. The key phrases are:

Your child is coming into being
 Your child has come into being
 Your child is
 Pleasant it is (Haile 1947:98-99).

The 4 "wide boards" are pressed against the body of the patient, along with other objects from the singer's pouch (the arrows, bows, etc.). The songs which accompany the pressing describe the coming of the supernaturals and the sanctifying of the patient. During the short singing which follows, the darkness songs are chanted.

The chant follows the same pattern each day for the first 4 days. Each morning the objects in the singer's pouch are "set out" on a mound of earth placed on the east side of the ceremonial hoghan. The patient strews cornmeal and pollen on the objects (as an offering, or *-gheel*), while the singer chants about the arrival of the supernaturals.¹⁴

Next is a sweat and emetic ceremony. A fire is made and 4 small snake sand-paintings are constructed at each of the 4 directions around the fire.¹⁵ Four pokers (*honesgish*), representing Holy Young Man, Holy Boy, Holy Young Woman, and Holy Girl, are first thrust into the fire and then placed by the snake sand-paintings. The patient enters and steps over the snakes, an action that presumably protects him from "ugly things." Emetic songs are chanted while the patient drinks the emetic mixture; these emphasize that the patient is eating a sacred thing.

While the sweating and vomiting take place, the singer chants the snake songs on the first day, the thunder songs on the second day, the buffalo songs on the third day, and the sun songs on the fourth day. These song sets include 12 or 13 verses which emphasize the coming of the supernaturals, the identification of the patient with them, and the *-gheel* appropriate for each supernatural. After the

14 Klukhohn and Wyman's informants (1940:81) state that the set-out (1) shows that a chant is in progress, (2) protects the hoghan from intrusion, (3) attracts the supernaturals, and (4) the objects symbolize the supernaturals themselves.

15 According to Haile, these represent snakes dressed as beautiful men and women who, in the myth, came into the ceremony and lay down by the fire.

vomit and sandpaintings have been removed and deposited to the north, the patient blows ashes off one of the pokers as if blowing away "ugliness."

The vomiting and ash blowing emphasize the main theme of this sub-ceremony: the removal of *hóchô*. This theme is further suggested by one of Kluckhohn and Wyman's informants when he explained why the patient should drink without touching the emetic bowl. "If you pick up the pan, the evil (*hóchô*) may jump back in your throat, but if you do not touch it, this shows that you wish to get rid of evil in your body" (Kluckhohn and Wyman 1940:85-86). The other themes of prestation and identification are minor but nevertheless present in the song texts.

Later in the morning, on each of the 4 days, prayersticks are cut and offered, emphasizing the theme of prestation. When tobacco is inserted into the 8 reeds from which the prayersticks are made, the singer chants, "Holy Young Man (Holy Young Woman, Holy Boy, Holy Girl), prepare a smoke for me" (Haile 1947:149). During the prayer that follows the preparation, the patient holds the prayersticks and repeats after the singer invocations such as:

Reared in dark pollen, at dropped-out-mountain,
young man chief I have made an offering to you (Haile 1947:154).

The prayersticks are then deposited by an assistant.

On the second, third, and fourth nights, there is a short singing. The singer repeats the song set used during the morning's sweat and emetic ceremony; the song set mentions the supernaturals to whom prayersticks were offered that day.

On the afternoon of the fourth day, after the last group of prayersticks is offered, a sandpainting is made. The 4 main supernaturals (Holy Young Man, Holy Boy, Holy Young Woman, and Holy Girl) are depicted in colored sand on the hogan floor.¹⁶ The patient's body is painted with symbols of the sun (on his chest) and moon (on his back), a "chant token" is tied to the patient's hair, and he sits on the sand painting. The singer applies the "wide boards" and arrows against him, feeds him more "mouth-put" medicine, administers the pollen ball, and finally presses the sand against the patient's body. Afterwards, the patient is fed "ceremonial stew" while the singer chants about this sacred food. All these actions make the patient sacred (1) by placing on the patient's body representa-

¹⁶ There are many sandpaintings which are used in Male Shooting Way (Reichard 1939; Newcomb and Reichard 1937). Presumably the patient can select from among several appropriate to a particular day. The painting mentioned here is the one described in Haile's text.

tives of the supernaturals, their garb or weapons, or (2) by giving him medicine and sacred food.

There is an all-night singing on the fifth and final night. Each of the 4 major song sets (snake songs, thunder songs, buffalo songs, and sun songs) are repeated during the night. The singing opens with a set of "first songs" and closes with the "dawn songs." In the former, all the supernaturals to whom prayersticks have been offered are mentioned; the patient is equated with each of these as being able to "go about" as a restored being. The phrase "pleasant conditions have returned" (*hózhó nadasdlii*) is a common ending for songs; this indicates that the patient's state has been transformed from negative (*hóchó*) to positive (*hózhó*).

The dawn songs mention the names of several animals (coyote, chickadee, black bear, hawk owl, blue jay) and various sacred objects which are identified with the patient. The fire is extinguished, and the patient leaves the hogan to breathe in the dawn. The drum tap is untied while the singer chants 2 songs, and the yucca windings and blades are placed in a tree. This ends the ceremony and begins a 4-day period of restrictions which the patient observes in order to make certain the chant is effective.

The 3 themes occur over and over again during the entire chant: (1) prestation or presentation of *-gheel*, (2) identification of the patient with the *diyin* by "applying to" or "taking in," and (3) removal of *hóchó*. They are repeated in each sub-ceremony, in each prayer, and in each song set. However, one of these themes may be dominant or emphasized in a particular sub-ceremony. During the prayerstick ceremony, prestations are important; during the sweat and emetic ceremony, the removal of *hóchó* is crucial, and during a sandpainting ceremony the identification of the patient with the *diyin* is the focus of effort.

CONCLUSIONS

Following Leach's suggestion (1966) that ritual communicates a complex store of information about Nature, I have explored the ways in which the chant setting replicates Navajo cosmology. I found it necessary to extend Leach's definition of Nature in order to characterize the Navajo universe in which natural elements are associated with supernatural beings, though the exact relationship between natural phenomena, plants and animals, and the *diyin dine'é'* is not clear and needs further investigation. It is apparent, however, that contact with some of these natural elements (wind, lightning, snakes, bears) causes illness which must be cured, according to Navajo belief, by aid from the proper *diyin dine'é'* through the appropriate ritual procedures. It is also clear that a fourfold

pattern using sex, color, and direction distinctions structures these ritual procedures as well as the cosmos.

I would expand Leach's suggestion that ritual communicates information about the natural-supernatural world and suggest that Navajo ritual also provides a means for manipulating relations within this structured universe. The communication of a static cosmological model is only one aspect of Navajo ritual; transformation of the patient's relation to the supernaturals and changes in his body state are also crucial.

Change in man-to-god relations and body conditions through symbolic manipulation has been discussed by Lévi-Strauss (1963) and Rigby (1968), and such symbolic manipulation is undoubtedly a feature of many curing and purification rites. In Navajo ritual, the important transformations are accomplished through prestation, identification, and removal. Prestations alter the patient's relation to the *diyin dine'é* from one of neutrality or hostility to aid. Identification and removal are the processes by which objects and actions directed towards the patient's body change it from a state of being afflicted and containing "ugly things" to one of being unafflicted and sacred.

My discussion of identification and removal suggests an interpretation of symbols which differs from Turner's analysis (1966), mentioned in the introduction of this paper. In contrast with Ndembu, there is little stress in Navajo ritual on body emission of internal substances (e.g., blood, milk, semen, urine, and fæces). The body emissions which are important (vomit and sweat) are representations of something external and ugly which has been taken into the body and which must be removed.

Through ritual procedures, natural products (plant, animal, and mineral substances) are transformed into objects associated with supernaturals. These are applied to or taken into the body. Objects which are simultaneously natural and supernatural are projected into or on the body rather than concepts derived from body states being projected into the natural or supernatural world.

Navajo color classification contrasts with that of Ndembu in a similar manner. Navajo white symbolism does imply purity in the sense of immunity, and black symbolism is associated with the negative qualities of "ugliness" and death. Though rare, red symbolism (such as reddening the body with ochre during Life Way rituals and using red sandstone in sandpaintings) signifies life-giving and renewing processes. Here, however, the similarities between Navajo and Ndembu color symbolism end. Navajo colors are associated with natural phenomena rather than with body substances. White is equated with white light and white stone, and not with milk; black is associated with darkness and jet stone, not with fæces.

Red is associated with red ochre, but not with blood. Blue and yellow more clearly derive from nature: the evening twilight and noonday sunlight, the blue sky and yellow cornmeal and pollen.

In suggesting that Navajos derive the meaning of their symbols from their model of the natural-supernatural world and not from bodily experiences, I am not denying the validity of Turner's analysis. Rather, I am providing an alternative interpretation which may be appropriate to the analysis of ritual in other cultures, especially North American Indian groups. Ritual can "say" many things; whether a particular ritual expresses social conflict or solidarity, provides an explanatory model of the universe, or centers on the psycho-physical concerns of the individual may depend on the ethnographic context. As anthropologists we need alternative ways of interpreting ritual in order to select the particular set of analytic concepts which best fits a particular body of data. In the Navajo case, it seems most appropriate to analyze chants as a system of symbolic objects and actions which both expresses cosmology and provides a means of dealing with individual illness through symbolic manipulation of man-to-god relationships and the patient's body state.

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